

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

L-3 Communications Ocean Systems

California Manufacturing Technology Consulting

L-3 Communications Ocean Systems Retains \$2 Million in Sales

Client Profile:

L-3 Communications Ocean Systems, a business unit of L-3 Communications Corporation, is a world leader in undersea technologies. For over 35 years, they have designed, built and supported small, high-performance tactical acoustic systems that provide customers with unmatched anti-submarine warfare capability: helicopter-deployed dipping sonars, towed arrays, space-efficient low-frequency sound sources, small low-cost mine hunter-killer systems, submarine countermeasures, and specialized precision acoustic sensors. Ocean Systems has established a global sales market fulfilling major contracts to the U.S. and 15 allied navies. Ocean Systems' main product lines are airborne sonar, surface ship systems, submarine systems, and mine warfare systems. L3 Communications employs close to 400 people and generates approximately \$100 million in annual sales.

Situation:

L-3 desired to transition from their current Quality Management System (QMS) to one that conformed to ISO 9001:2000, the updated version of the standard set by the International Organization of Standardization (ISO) assuring customers that the company registered has a good QMS in place. Their goal was to achieve registration to the ISO 9001:2000 Standard within a target deadline. The company contacted California Manufacturing Technology Consulting, a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help.

Solution:

A team of CMTC consultants and L-3 management began the project in February of 2002. They started with a review of L-3's Quality Manual and Quality System Procedures, and related work instructions. Additionally, the project team assessed L-3's conformance to ISO 9001:2000 and AS9100 requirements in each of the organization's departments. Several training sessions were conducted to teach L-3's 374 employees the requirements of ISO 9001:2000 and how it affected their operations. To ensure effective implementation of the required procedures, CMTC supported L-3 in conducting a two-day Internal Auditor Training and offered on-site assistance for L3 as they conducted a two-day audit of the entire organization. An audit report was compiled that detailed the "gaps" between L-3's current practices and the requirements of the ISO 9001:2000 Standard. Recommendations for resolving the nonconformities identified by the audit were provided by CMTC. Ongoing support was provided by CMTC during the final registration audit. L-3 achieved registration to ISO 9001:2000 in November 2003. The successful transition from the current QMS to ISO 9001:2000 yielded positive results. In terms of preparing for the registration audit, CMTC worked with L-3 personnel and management to revise documentation and processes to meet the requirements of the ISO 9001:2000 Standard. The Management Review process was modified successfully so as to comply with ISO requirements. Measurable objectives were also established and documented to monitor the progress of Quality Management System improvement.

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Results:

- * Achieved ISO 9001:2000 registration.
- * Increased productivity by 15 percent.
- * Qualified to bid on programs requiring registration to ISO 9001:2000.
- * Retained \$2 million in sales.
- * Achieved a more competitive and profitable position.

Testimonial:

"CMTC delivered more than they promised. They were very committed and were there to assure we satisfied our customers."

Rhod Resella, Director of Product Quality Assurance